



Pulse magazine

February
2024

Hospital encourages patients to come forward for cataract surgery - see page 5

Welcome!

Welcome to this month's edition of Pulse. In these winter months where things can look grey and gloomy we look to inform, share and congratulate successes in equal measures with stories that will hopefully resonate with you as they do with me.

I'm Bal Bahia one of the trust's clinical Non-Executive Directors. Time flies and I've been here since Spring 2019. I'm chair of the Royal Berks Charity Committee, and a Board Maternity Safety Champion. I'm also a GP and live locally and hence a trust trust in a variety of roles.

I'd like to congratulate the Vascular Access Improvement Group, the cancer treatment support for Ghana and the recognition of Call4Concern with the trust's central role in shaping policy in this domain. In my visits around to wards and departments I have been inspired by the hard work and dedication to providing excellent care for our population and been impressed with the Improving Together program that's being rolled out.

Your input and feedback as always are invaluable and I'd highlight the primary care strategy that's out for consultation, the measles vaccination advice and the different roles in general practice (as a GP!) and the Building Berkshire Together survey.

I can't leave without a mention of the charity quiz on 12 March 2024 and remind you we are looking both to raise but also spend the charity funds on staff and patient welfare where we can.

Dr. Bal Bahia, Non-Executive Director



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Measles – make sure your child is vaccinated

Measles is a highly infectious disease and can be passed on even before a rash appears.

Make sure your child is protected from becoming seriously unwell from measles by making sure they are up to date with their MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccinations.

The MMR vaccine is a safe and effective way of protecting against measles, mumps and rubella. Two doses of the vaccine are needed for life-long protection.

The first dose of MMR is given around a child's 1st birthday, and the second dose at around 3 years and 4 months old. However, anyone can catch up at any age on missed doses - it's never too late get protected. Find out more on the NHS website: [MMR \(measles, mumps and rubella\) vaccine](#)



NHS

More than 3 million unvaccinated children are at risk of catching measles in England

Make sure your child is up to date with their MMR vaccinations



Call4Concern features in Nursing Times podcast

Listen to the current [Nursing Times podcast](#) in which Alison Schofield, Lead Nurse Critical Outreach Team is interviewed about the trust's Call 4 Concern service in the wake of the campaign for Martha's Rule.

[Call 4 Concern](#) (C4C) is a patient safety service, launched by the trust in 2009. The service enables patients or loved ones to call the Critical Care Outreach Team for urgent help and advice, if they feel that the health team has not recognised their own or their loved one's changing condition.



NHS
Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Are you concerned about a patient's condition?

If you have ongoing concerns after you have spoken to the ward nurse or doctor then contact:

Call 4 Concern

Phone or text us 24/7
0777 475 1352



Hospital encourages patients to come forward for cataract surgery



Our clinicians are encouraging patients requiring cataract surgery to come forward after a significant decline in referrals over the past year.

Thousands of local patients may be unnecessarily travelling long distances to unfamiliar healthcare providers because they have been told, incorrectly, that waiting times in their local NHS units are very long.

The trust has seen a 42 per cent drop in monthly referrals since 2019. This is despite low NHS waiting lists for cataract surgery with most patients receiving treatment within a month or two from referral.

Patients with cataracts can speak to their local optometrist and ask to be referred to Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust. You will then receive a specialist outpatient assessment within a month and free cataract surgery shortly after in Reading, Newbury, or Windsor.

Cataracts occur when the lens of your eye develops cloud patches. They most commonly affect adults as a result of ageing and will usually get worse over time and limit your vision. Cataract surgery involves removing the cloudy lens and replacing with a clear plastic one – it is the most common surgery in the UK and recovery typically lasts between two and six weeks.

Martin Leyland, Consultant Ophthalmologist, said: “When considering cataract surgery, it’s really important patients consider all the options available to them. Local NHS waiting lists for cataract surgery are currently very low so it is quick to be seen by experienced teams in Reading, Newbury and Windsor.”

Pharmacies now able to treat common health conditions

Patients in Berkshire West can now pop into their high street pharmacy for a consultation on seven common conditions at their high street pharmacy including ear-ache, a sore throat or sinusitis.

With many pharmacies open late into the evening, this major expansion of pharmacy services means it's now easier for people to access care at a time that's convenient to them. Highly trained pharmacists can now assess and treat patients for the following health conditions without the need for an appointment or prescription:

- sinusitis
- sore throats
- earache
- infected insect bites
- impetigo
- shingles
- uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women (under the age of 65)



More than 95 per cent of pharmacies in England have signed up to this scheme which aims to free up 10 million GP appointments a year nationally.

There's more information on the Department for Health & Social Care's website: [Pharmacy First: what you need to know](#)

Share your views on the criteria for a new Royal Berkshire Hospital



The trust is on the government's New Hospital Programme and will receive significant investment to rebuild or redevelop Royal Berkshire Hospital. We've identified a number of challenges with redeveloping the hospital on the current site for 21st century care and we are exploring alternative locations.

We want to involve as many people as possible throughout [our work to deliver a new hospital](#) and in this phase we're eager to hear your thoughts on what would be important to you in a new site. Please do have your say by filling in our survey or coming to see us to find out more at one of [our New Hospital Programme events](#)

[Take part in our New Hospital Programme survey](#)

Radiotherapy colleagues improve cancer treatment in Ghana



Members of staff from the trust's Radiotherapy Department sent a very special delivery to Ghana, with the aim of improving the outcomes for people receiving cancer treatment.

By working with radiographers and clinicians at a hospital in the Kumasi, they have donated dozens of pieces of immobilisation kit – for example foam headrests – which will allow staff at the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital to provide their patients with more safe and accurate cancer treatment.

Victoria Hammond-Turner, Technical and Development Lead Therapeutic Radiographer said, "All around the world, patients with cancer are treated using radiotherapy every day. This involves targeting the cancerous areas with controlled levels of radiation. One very important part of that is making sure the radiation only reaches those areas we need to target. And that means keeping the patient very still.

"We continuously update the equipment we use to help our patients stay still when they are receiving their treatment. This means we often have items like foam headrests and knee supports we no longer have a use for as they have been replaced by more up to date options."

The trust has a long relationship with the Radiotherapy team in Ghana going back more than a decade. This has involved clinicians, radiographers, and physicists from Radiotherapy team at the trust visiting a hospital in Ghana and a reciprocal visit from members of the Ghana team.

During these visits, and speaking to the staff, it became clear that they did not have all the equipment they needed to do their jobs, and that items which might be destined for landfill in the UK would make a huge difference to them.

Paula Horne, Radiotherapy Service Manager at the Berkshire Cancer Centre said, "We know that in the hospital in Kumasi, staff have to make use of what they have, which is often not very much. For example improvising and creating headrests out of rolls of paper. I was part of the team that visited Ghana initially and am fully aware of the challenges the team faces to make sure their patients receive the best care possible. It makes perfect sense to donate the equipment we don't use anymore, helping them give their patients the best possible treatment they can.

Gold award for improving vascular access care



The trust's Vascular Access Improvement Group (VAIG) was recently awarded the Infection Prevention Society Impact Gold Award (Patient Safety) for their commitment to reducing the risk of line-associated infections and improving the quality of vascular access care.

Patients in our care may need to have a vascular access procedure to insert a thin

plastic tube (line) into a vein to deliver medication, such as chemo or nutrition over weeks or months. With this procedure there's a risk of infection developing inside or around the place the line is inserted.

To minimise the risk of infection, VAIG was set up around 2 years ago to develop a line infection surveillance system, working with teams across the trust to standardise practice and increase training for all staff involved in line care.

The first task of the group was to establish an audit of vascular access related practices and improve data collection - this would provide a baseline that could be used to measure the quality of the service being provided including infection rate.

At the trust we now have four highly trained specialist nurses who can carry out the vascular access procedure for patients and a robust surveillance system to identify potential line infections. When a line associated infection is diagnosed, the system ensures an appropriate investigation is completed involving relevant specialties who manage and insert vascular access devices.

Dr Iyer, Consultant Microbiologist said, 'We are really proud to be recognised for this award. Lines in patients are literally their lifeline - keeping someone alive either through the delivery of vital medication or nutrition. Line surveillance supports data-driven improvements in line-care, thereby enabling patients to keep lines in for longer, rather than removing and repeating the procedure every couple of days.'

Trust Preceptorship Programme earns quality mark

Congratulations to the trust's Clinical Education and Practice Development Team who've been awarded the National Preceptorship for Nursing Interim Quality Mark for their Trust Preceptorship Programme for Nursing.

The quality mark demonstrates that we meet all of the required elements of NHSE's National Preceptorship Framework. The year-long Preceptorship Programme is for all newly registered nurses and nursing associates when they join us, and includes:

- support within the clinical area
- a number of additional study days
- completion of a professional portfolio
- regular development review meetings



Understanding your GP practice



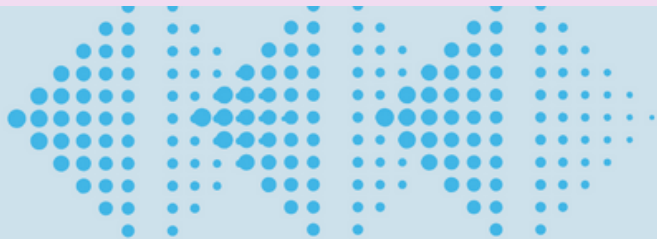
With the support of GP practices in the Berkshire West area, the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust has launched a series of short videos to help patients understand the roles of different healthcare professionals working at their GP practice.

The various roles under the spotlight

include practice managers, GP paramedics, health and wellbeing coaches and clinical pharmacists.

You can watch the full playlist of videos that have been released on our YouTube channel: [YouTube | Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust](#)

Give your views on the draft Primary Care Strategy



NHS

Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire
and Berkshire West
Integrated Care Board



Help us shape the future of Primary Care

Share your ideas and experiences with us today

Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS) wants the public to share their views on the draft Primary Care Strategy via a new online survey – which can be found online: [BOB ICS Primary Care Strategy](#).

The survey is open until 29 February 2024.

Grants Awarded to Support Adult Health and Wellbeing



Ten local groups have shared grants worth a total of £122,000 to help them support the physical and mental health of Reading residents in their communities. The grants have been distributed by the Better Care Fund managed by [Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board](#) (BOB ICB) and Reading Borough Council. The following projects have received funding:

- Coffee and Craft
- Reading Gateway Church, Parish Nurse
- Mencap, Family Health Advisor
- Get Berkshire Active
- ACRE, Community Wellbeing Hub (CWH) Partnership
- RVA, Training for Wellbeing Practitioners
- Mustard Tree
- Daybreak Family Group Conferences
- Together for Mental Health
- Parents & Children Together (Alana House)

Find out more on Reading Borough Council's website: [£122,000 in Grants Awarded to Support Adult Health and Wellbeing](#).

Are you taking on a new challenge in 2024?

Are you ready to take on new challenges in 2024? Royal Berks Charity has an array of thrilling events lined up, from skydiving to running, quizzing to baking. We invite you to join us!

Explore our website at www.royalberkscharity.co.uk to get involved and make a meaningful impact this year.

Discounts? Did you know?

As a member of the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust you are eligible to amazing Health Service Discounts to save money on holidays, electrical goods, meals, days out and much more! To register, follow this link: [Register | NHS Discounts | Health Service Discounts](#) and select Foundation Trust Member.

Don't forget to let us know what amazing discounts you get so we can share them!

Check out some of this month's exclusive discounts:

- [Levi's from Levis– 50% off + extra 20%](#)
- [Virgin Experience Days – 20% off](#)
- [First home | Remortgage | Moving home | fee-free mortgage advice](#)
- [Admiral from Admiral – 10% off](#)
- [JD Sports from JD Sports – 10% off](#)
- [Pandora from Pandora – 10% NHS](#)
- [Hotpoint Home Appliances – up to 50% off](#)
- [easyJet holidays from easyJet Holidays - £25 e-gift card](#)
- [TUI Holidays for Heroes from TUI – save up to £250 + £100 NHS](#)

Meet your Council of Governors

Find a [full list of your Council of Governors](#) on our website.

Get Involved and Have Your Say

Open Meetings

Why not come along to one of our upcoming open meetings: find the details and agendas on our trust website page:

[Open meetings | Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust](#)

Wednesday 28 February 2024, 5pm – Council of Governors
Trust Education Centre, Royal Berkshire Hospital

Wednesday 27 March 2024, 9am - Board of Directors
Trust Education Centre, Royal Berkshire Hospital

Become a member of the trust

Sign up family and friends to become a member via our [online form](#) to:

- receive our latest updates
- shape how hospital services are delivered
- be eligible to receive our NHS discounts (see page 8)

Get in touch with the team: Foundation.trust@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Join us for the ultimate charity quiz night!



CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT

The Jazz Cafe
Select Car Leasing Stadium
Tuesday 12th March


Tickets £5.00 per person

Teams of 6
Food available to pre-order

DOORS OPEN FROM 6.00PM
QUIZ STARTS AT 7.30PM






www.royalberkscharity.co.uk/quiz | 0118 322 6969 | events@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

 Date: Tuesday, March 12, 2024

 Time: Doors open at 6:00pm, quiz starts at 7:30pm

 Venue: The Jazz Café, Select Car Leasing Stadium, Junction 11, Reading RG2 0FL

Why should you be there?

-  Quiz master: Bill Buckley, BBC Radio Berkshire presenter will lead six rounds of brain-teasing questions and fun challenges.
-  Compete: Form a team of six and vie for quiz night glory!
-  Food: Pre-order tasty dishes for £10 before March 8th from the Jazz Café.
-  Raffle: Win big prizes by entering the £5 raffle strips.
-  Good vibes: Have a blast while supporting a great cause!

Tickets are only £5.00! Secure yours online: [Royal Berks Charity](#) and get ready for a night of laughter and giving back. Food options will be emailed after booking.

Don't miss out on the fun! Book your tickets today and spread the word to your friends and family. Let's make this event a huge success for charity!